

# The Bloomfield Record.

EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

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New York & Greenwood Lake R. R.

On Saturday Morning, May 10th, 1890, at 10:00 A. M.

LEAVE NEW YORK.

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He founded and encouraged library, horticultural, and other societies, helped in the building of churches, and paid particular attention to obtaining for the people facilities for marketing their products advantageously.

In all these concerns he sought the advantage of the settlers on his lands, knowing that their prosperity would make him also prosperous. But one other part of his plan appears to me to have been of extraordinary importance, though usually it is not mentioned, in the description of Vineland. Mr. Landis established the price of his own uncultivated lands at twenty-five dollars per acre. At that price he sold to the first settler; and that price he did not increase for many years. Any one could, within two or three years, buy wild land on the Vineland tract at twenty-five dollars an acre. This means he did not speculate upon the improvements of the settlers. He gave to them the advantage of their labor. It resulted that many poor men bought, cleared, and planted places in Vineland on purpose to sell them, certain that they could, if they wished, buy more land at the same price of twenty-five dollars per acre which they originally paid.

In my judgment this feature of the Vineland enterprise, more than any other, changed it from a merely selfish speculation to one of a higher order, in which the settlers, to a large extent, have a common interest with the proprietor of the land. He might have done all the rest—might have laid out roads, proclaimed a "no fence" law, provided the establishment of drainage, helped on educational and other enterprises—and still, had he raised the price of his wild lands as the settlers increased, he would have been a mere land speculator, and I doubt if his scheme would have attained more than a very moderate and short-lived success. But the undertaking to sell his wild lands at the one fixed price, not only gave later comers an advantage, which attracted them to a constantly-increasing force, but it gave the poorer settlers an occupation from which many of them gained handsomely—the improvement of places to sell to new-comers with capital. The result showed Mr. Landis was a visionary, and that the undertaking to sell his wild lands at a fixed price, and to offer examining the soil and general character of the region, he bought sixteen thousand acres in one parcel. To this he added, soon after, another purchase of fourteen thousand acres, making thirty thousand in all. He has bought lately, in 1875, twenty-three thousand acres more.

The country is a rolling plain, densely overgrown with small wood with one or two streams running through it, with water obtainable at from fifteen to thirty feet everywhere, and perfectly healthy. Mr. Landis took possession in August, 1861, and at once began to develop the land according to his own ideas. He laid out, first, the town site of Vineland, in the center of the tract, most had the adjacent plain surveyed, and laid out into tracts of ten, twenty and fifty acres laid out and opened roads, so as to make three small parcels accessible; and then he began to advertise for settlers.

His offer was to settle the land, living within thirty-four miles of Philadelphia by railroad, in tracts from ten to forty or sixty acres, at twenty-five dollars per acre, guaranteeing a clear title, and giving reasonable credit, but coming the purchaser to make certain improvements within a year after buying. These consisted of a house—which need not be costly—clearing of some acres of ground, and the planting of shade trees along the roadside, and sowing this strip of roadside with some kind of grass. It was also stipulated that if the owner, after years, neglected his roadside improvement, it should be kept in order by the town at his cost.

Mr. Landis had procured the passage of a law prohibiting the straying of cattle within the limits of the township in which his estate lay; and consequently the new settlers were not obliged to build fences. This was an immense saving to the people, who came in mostly with small means. Vineland has to-day between eleven thousand and twelve thousand people; it has about one hundred and eighty miles of road, and it is probable that the "no fence" regulation as it is called, has saved the inhabitants at least a million and a half of dollars.

He prevented in the beginning, with the most solicitude, the establishment of bar-rooms or dram-shops on the tract; the Legislature gave permission to the people of the township, by an annual vote, to decide whether the sale of liquor at retail should be allowed or forbidden, and they have constantly forbidden it, to their immense advantage.

He endeavored as soon as possible to establish factories in the village, and succeeded so well in this that there has long been a local market for a part of the products of the place.

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